Community Legal Information Association of Prince Edward Island

Annual Report
2001-2002

Board of Directors

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Vice President:	John Hennessey
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Staff

Executive Director:	Ann Sherman
Executive Assistant:	Maisie Smith
Program Assistant:	Donna Langille
Office Assistant:	Noreen MacInnis

Youth Project Staff

Project Manager:	Cheryl Clark
Youth Coordinator:	Shaun McNeill

Funders

Department of Justice, Canada
Office of the Attorney General, PEI
PEI Law Foundation
Law Society of PEI

President's Report

It has been my privilege to serve on the Board of Directors for Community Legal Information Association (CLIA) for the past four years and in particular the last two as President of the Board. It has indeed been a learning experience for me. Ann Sherman and staff have made this responsibility very manageable and rewarding.

The staff at CLIA continue to reach out to the community and have been quite involved in numerous community initiatives. All of the staff worked collaboratively with numerous community resources across the province as they continue to provide information about our laws and justice system to Islanders.

This has been another busy and productive year for CLIA. The requests for services continue to increase and staff members continue to find ways to meet the demands. This organization has a very positive profile in our province and its services are easily accessible.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Ann Sherman and the staff of CLIA who have been wonderful resources, always willing and able to answer questions and provide support. They demonstrate a commitment and a passion for this work which is obvious to anyone involved with the organization.

In closing, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Board members who have worked hard this year and have provided their time and expertise to assist CLIA in carrying out its mandate. I have appreciated the opportunity of working with you and most of all learning from each of you.

Respectfully submitted,

Dianne Griffin

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Executive Director's Report

Another active and productive year has seen us build more partnerships, be involved in more activities and focus more on areas of concern to Islanders.

The demand for legal information keeps increasing and we are constantly searching for more effective ways to respond without 'burning out' in the process. There is change in what we do as well. The technological revolution has caught up with us and our resource centre, the legal information collection, is no longer well used. The board of directors has struck a sub-committee to explore our options. One of these options is to disperse the collection and redirect resource centre resources into the website. To this end we have been speaking with local website designers to see how we can re-design and update the website so that it is interesting, useful and fun for users – while being relatively easy for staff to maintain.

Highlights of the year include the Legal Pix workshop, a feature on the TV program Island Focus, the Crime Prevention Awards and the launch of our information package for young single parents. We were very involved in the series of public consultations on family violence and have been active on the Chief Justice's Access to Justice Task Force.

The *Mobilizing the Community About Youth Justice* project provided other highlights. We were delighted that the first ever residential Adventures in Law camp focused on First Nations youth justice and culture and provided an opportunity for Aboriginal youth, both on and off reserve, to come together in order to learn more about their culture – and the law! The project staff also completed a video *Picking Up the Pieces* that focuses on restorative justice using a role play of a community justice forum.

I would like to thank Maisie, Donna, Cheryl, Shaun and Noreen for their hard work and I wish to acknowledge the very many volunteers who help us deliver our services. Their contributions are many and varied and we could not do our work without them.

Respectfully submitted,

Ann Sherman

Toll Free Legal Information Line

We received 2180 inquiries (2724 separate questions) this year.

- 90% on the toll-free line,
- 8% walk-in
- Just over two thirds of the callers were women
- Over 50% callers were from Queen's County
- One third of the callers were given information and/or referred to other agencies
- Nearly half (45%) of the inquiries dealt with family law
- 9% were about wills & estates
- 949 inquirers were sent written materials
- An additional 118 callers wanted only to receive written information

Lawyer Referral Service

The number of requests for a lawyer referral held steady at 1566 calls.

- 63% of the callers were women
- 55% of the calls involved family law
- 9% civil litigation
- Two thirds of the calls originated in Queen's County.
- A copy of *You and Your Lawyer* is mailed to every person requesting a referral.
- Complaints about individual lawyers are passed on to the Law Society.

We are currently working with the Law Society to put together a survey for lawyers about the Lawyer Referral Service. We have also held and are planning to hold more discussions with private lawyers and Legal Aid about the Law Foundation (family legal aid) Program.

Resource Centre

Use of this library has decreased in each of the past four years. This year very few people came into the resource centre to do their own research. The Youth Justice Project, Mobilizing the Community, has used the Mock Trials kits and other staff members continue to use publications for their own 'on the job' needs. While it is important to maintain a small collection for internal use, the Board has struck a Library Committee to explore future options for this resource and better ways to use the funding that supports it.

Web Site

We received 4231 hits, 23 email inquiries and 13 requests for publications. The potential is obviously much greater than this and we acknowledge that much more developmental work needs to be done. We received no feed back from users with suggestions about the web site. Although we have exhausted current funding for web site development we intend to secure new resources to help us develop and promote the site further.

Publications

We published the following new pamphlets:

- *Driving Safely as You Age*
- *Custody and Access*
- CLIA *publications list*
- CLIA *Speakers' Bureau*
- *Going through Separation or Divorce?*

The following pamphlets were revised:

- *Moving to a Nursing Home*
- *Health Care Decisions* (worked with province to revise this)
- *Drinking, Driving and the Law*
- *Alcohol, Drugs and Snowmobiles*
- *Support: What You Need to Know*

We distributed almost 80,000 pieces of information including:

- 311 complete sets of legal information for young single parents
- 691 Child Support kits
- 350 family law boxes
- 69 complete sets of *Planning Ahead: What Seniors Need to Know*
- 308 Divorce kits
- 519 youth justice kits (YOA)

We are very pleased that the following publications have been translated into French:

- *Legal information kit for young single parents*
- *Support: What you need to Know*
- *Drinking, Driving and the Law*
- *Driving Safely as You Age*

Our publication program is dependent on volunteer contributions from many professionals and lay persons who give their time to review our draft publications before they go to press.

Media Programmes

CLIA presents regular bi-weekly interviews on CBC Radio – Mainstreet. In addition we have had articles published in the local papers and given interviews on TV and radio on topical issues of interest to Islanders. These included:

- Family Law/young single parents/Positive Parenting
- Youth Justice Renewal
- Family Violence Prevention
- Impaired Driving

Island Focus, a provincial show on Cable TV presented a program about CLIA, looking particularly at our work in the area of family law and family violence prevention

Acting as Resource to Government and Community

We organized, presented or were otherwise involved in many activities this year. These included:

- Volunteer Training at Rape & Sexual Assault Crisis Centre
- Sitting as a lay member of the Social Workers Review Board
- Being appointed by the Office of the Attorney General to the Access to Justice Task Force
- Undertaking a plain language review of materials for the Department of Education, the Advisory Council on the Status of Women and Rape Crisis Centre
- Organizing and presenting a full day Law Teachers Workshop including a mock trial conducted by teacher participants before PEI Chief Justice Gerard Mitchell
- Conducting information sessions for Pownal House, Zero Tolerance Project, ALERT, Addiction Services Women's program
- Responding to at least 26 Speakers' Bureau requests, some of which required a number of presenters
- Worked with the Provincial Youth Centre (closed custody) to build a custom brochure rack for the Charlottetown Supreme Court
- Provided written information for numerous displays

Family Violence Prevention

This is a priority area for the staff and board of CLIA. Last year we were involved in the following activities:

- CLIA is a member of Premier's Action Committee on Family Violence Prevention (PAC), the working group for Woman Abuse Policy & Protocols project and the Workplace Safety Initiative project.
- We facilitated a partnership between the Rotary Club of Charlottetown Royalty and PAC for the Workplace Safety Initiative
- We provided information (verbal & written in displays) and facilitation skills to 6 public consultations on family violence prevention
- CLIA sits on the steering committee of Zero Tolerance project & Justice Options for Women project
- We distributed 1363 English and 261 French copies of the "Islanders Guide to the Victims of Family Violence Act"

Family Law/Legal Aid/Self-representation in Court

- Lawyer Referral Service calls and development of proposed survey for lawyers
- Access to Justice Task Force and research project,
- PEI Women's Coalition: legal aid & social justice for women
- *Going through Separation or Divorce: PEI Services you may find helpful*
- Legal information for young single parents information sessions,
- Positive Parenting facilitation
- Involvement in development of the new family law Division of the Office of Attorney General

Youth Justice Information

We have now completed the second year of our three year project about the renewal of youth justice: Mobilizing the Community about Youth Justice. Project staff have given presentations to over 300 adults in 13 community groups and to about 900 young people in schools and youth groups. The project hosted three Adventures in Law Camps with activities ranging from purely recreational to visits to the Summerside Youth Centre and the Courthouse. Participants also conducted mock jury trials before Supreme Court justices. One camp focused on Aboriginal youth justice and culture. A youth justice web site and video *Picking Up the Pieces* were also developed during this year.

- Information about provincial laws affecting young persons was provided by CLIA staff to NOW program participants, Tourism Employment programs, Pownal House youth group and others.
- Youth project staff presented sessions at the national RCMP Week Encounters with Canada activities for youth

Supported Decision Making/Consent to Treatment/Rights

- Revised *Moving into a Nursing Home*
- Worked with the Province on a new Health Care Decisions pamphlet
- Worked on the development of a protocol for the criminal justice response to accused/victims with communication difficulties
- Undertook some (quiet) personal advocacy for callers with communications problems

Victims of Crime

- Chaired Victims Services Advisory Committee and worked closely with Victim Services staff.
- Distributed 761 English copies and 141 French copies of "A Guide for Witnesses".
- Organized the Reaching Isolated Victims project

Crime Prevention

CLIA is represented on each of the following organizations/activities:

- Joint Management Committee, Community Mobilization Program
- External Review Committee, Partnership Program
- Atlantic Coordinating Committee on Crime Prevention & Community Safety
- Board of Directors, Crime Prevention Association of PEI
- Crime Prevention Week planning committee
- Protection of Children Committee for provincial Healthy Child Development Strategy
- 4 staff trained as facilitators for RCMP Community Justice Forums
- Chaired Round Table on low literacy and crime prevention
- Involved in Restorative Justice Network & Conflict Resolution Co-op

Child Support, Custody and Access

- 692 inquiry calls dealt specifically with child support, custody and access. 858 lawyer referrals were about family matters.
- Worked with the provincial child support clerks, provided 691 Child Support kits including over 9000 pieces of information
- Gave 5 single parent workshops
- Facilitated 3 Positive Parenting sessions
- Participated in national consultation on custody, access and child support
- Distributed young single parents information (French and English) to all jr. high and high school guidance counselors

Project Development

- Reaching Isolated Victims project
- Family Law Information project
- Survey of lay people involved with the PEI Civil Courts
- Renewal of Youth Justice project
- Public Education Steering Committee on Impaired Driving (C.P. research project)
- Legal Pix workshop, in collaboration with the Law Courts Education Society of BC

Government Policy Initiatives

- Member, Access to Justice Task Force
- PEI Team at Halifax Conference about YCJA Conferencing,
- Member of Premier's Action Committee
- Co Chair, Victim Services Advisory Committee, JMC
- Involved in provincial government strategies:
  - Healthy Child Development Strategy,
  - Impaired Driving Strategy,
  - Crime Prevention Strategy
- Restorative Justice / alternative measures discussions
- Voluntary Sector Initiative consultations